

59. (Previously presented) A method for removing or reducing the concentration of a nitroaromatic compound in a sample comprising contacting a sample suspected of containing said nitroaromatic compound with one or more hydrogenotrophic bacteria and zero-valent iron, or a device comprising culture medium comprising zero-valent iron.
60. (Previously presented) The method in accordance with claim 59, wherein said nitroaromatic compound is trinitrotoluene, RDX, HMX, 2-aminodinitrotoluene, 4-aminodinitrotoluene, or parathion.
61. (Previously presented) The method in accordance with claim 59, wherein said nitroaromatic compound is trinitrotoluene, RDX, or HMX.

#### REMARKS

**A. Status of the Claims**

Claims 1-18, 34-37, 42-54 and 56-61 are pending in the application, and of these, claims 9-12, 34-37, 46-54 and 56-61 are allowed. Claims 1-8, 13-15 and 42-45 stand rejected. The specific grounds for rejection, and applicants' response thereto, are set out in detail below.

**B. Claim Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §102(b)**

**A. *Belay***

Claims 1-3, 5-8 and 13-15 stand rejected under §102(b) over *Belay et al.* *Belay* is said to teach a device comprising zero-valent iron and an autotrophic, hydrogenotrophic bacterium. The device is said to comprise an inlet port and an outlet port with an anaerobic digester having a glass support. Applicants traverse, but in the interest of advancing the prosecution, have

amended claim 1 to recite, in the alternative, the limitations of claims 16 and 18, each of which have been indicated as otherwise allowable. Thus, claims 1-3, 5-8 and 13-15, as presented for reconsideration, are believed to be novel over Belay.

In light of the amendment, applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection.

**B. Hunter**

Claims 42-45 are rejected under §102(b) over Hunter *et al.* According to the examiner, Hunter teaches “a method remediating the specified halocarbons *in situ* ... by contacting a site with a device.” Applicants traverse.

Applicants direct the examiner to claim 42, from which claims 43-45 depend. Claim 42 now recites “zero-valent iron” in both aspects of the claimed invention (this limitation was previously omitted, in error, from the second aspect). Thus, it is believed that claims 42-45, as presented for reconsideration, are novel over Hunter. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

**C. Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §103**

**A. Claim 4**

Claim 4 is rejected as obvious over Belay *et al.* in view of Semp *et al.* Belay is cited as above. Semp is said to teach use of the disclosed bacteria for removing undesirable matter from water. Applicants traverse.

As discussed above, claim 1 has been amended to recite, in the alternative, the allowable subject matter found in claims 16 and 18. Claim 4 ultimately depends from claim 1. Belay and

Semp do not render obvious the subject matter of claim 4, as presented for reconsideration. Thus, applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection.

**B. Claims 7 and 8**


Claims 7 and 8 are rejected as obvious over Belay *et al.* As with claim 4, claims 7 and 8 ultimately depend from claim 1. Thus, the amendments discussed above with respect to claim 1 are believed to obviate the present rejection, as Belay does not render obvious the subject matter of claims 7 and 8, as presented for reconsideration.

**V. Conclusion**

In light of the foregoing, applicants submit that all claims are in condition for allowance, and an early notification to that effect is earnestly solicited. Should the examiner have any questions regarding this response, a telephone call to the under attorney is respectfully requested.

Please date stamp and return the enclosed postcard as evidence of receipt.

Respectfully submitted,

  
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Date: October 6, 2003